Behind the case: Knobbe adds $184m to Masimo's record win against Apple

The firm reveals how its litigation strategies informed the arguments that took Masimo's judgment past $818 million



Pictured L-R: Brian Claassen, Sheila Swaroop and Brian Horne

Knobbe Martens recently secured a $184 million pre-judgment interest award for medical technology company Masimo, adding to its record-setting patent infringement verdict in 2025.

District Court Judge James Selna granted Masimo's motion for pre- and post-judgment interest against Apple on October 5 in the US District Court for the Central District of California, marking the latest development in the companies' patent dispute.

Knobbe Martens has represented Masimo in several trade secrets and patent disputes against Apple.

Notably, the firm helped Masimo secure a victory in a patent dispute involving its heart monitoring technology.

Following an eight-day trial in the Central District of California, a jury ruled in November 2025 that Apple was liable for patent infringement and awarded Masimo $634 million in damages.

Knobbe Martens later moved to secure interest on behalf of Masimo.

The court ruled that Apple now owes Masimo $184 million in pre-judgment interest in addition to the initial $634 million damages award, bringing the total damages amount to $818 million.

The court has also ordered Apple to pay post-judgment interest on the $818 million award "until judgment is satisfied".

A team from Knobbe Martens, comprising partners Brian Claassen, Brian Horne, Sheila Swaroop, Stephen Jensen, Mark Kachner, Joseph Re, Douglas Wentzel, Perry Oldham, Jared Bunker, Kendall Loebbaka, Adam Powell, Daniel Hughes, Ben Shiroma, along with associates Melis Tirhi and Rhett Ramsey, represented Masimo.

WilmerHale acted for Apple.

Managing IP sat down with Knobbe Martens lawyers, Claassen and Horne, who shared how the team approached representing Masimo in several disputes against Apple and their post-trial interest argument.

How did you come to work with the client?

BH: Knobbe Martens has represented Masimo for more than 30 years, including in multiple bet-the-company litigations. Before this Apple campaign, we successfully litigated on behalf of Masimo against medical device industry leaders Nellcor and Philips. Our firm has believed in Masimo since its founding, helping to build its IP portfolio. Since then, we have consistently helped Masimo enforce its IP rights.

How did you prepare for the trial in 2025?

BC: The jury trial in 2025 was not the initial trial, even in this matter. By that point, we had already conducted at least three trials and numerous IPRs and appeals against the Apple team.

That said, issue selection was key to our 2025 trial preparation. We made a strategic decision to focus the trial on claims from one patent. Those claims had already survived IPR and Federal Circuit review regarding validity. For infringement, we developed strong evidence demonstrating that Apple used Masimo's claimed technology. Our damages team worked with experts, who used survey data and careful analysis, to establish the economic value of Apple using Masimo's patented technology.

We also selected a team of exceptional attorneys who all believed in the client and the value of its technology. Our trial presenters – myself [Brian Claassen], Brian Horne and Sheila Swaroop – all had experience litigating against Apple and worked well together. We each focused on different aspects of the case and coordinated closely with one another.

How did the outcomes of earlier patent and trade secrets proceedings influence the way you approached the November 2025 trial?

BH: Those earlier cases shared a common set of facts with the patent case. Going back to 2013, Apple had seen the value of incorporating Masimo's technology into its products and even approached Masimo to collaborate.

From our earlier proceedings, we understood which facts resonated and how Apple's patent infringement fit within the overall story. Our success at the ITC, where we obtained an import ban on certain Apple Watches that infringed Masimo's patent, demonstrated that a judge and the commission agreed that Apple had used Masimo's technology. Our trade secret trials cemented our strategy to explain Masimo's technology in an understandable way to a jury without oversimplifying it.

How did you decide which patents and strategic approaches to pursue in the district court versus the ITC?

BC: We amplified the common theme that Masimo refined its technology over time through rigorous research and development, but we tailored the patents and remedies to each forum. The patents asserted in California had different invention stories and different expiration dates than the patents asserted in the ITC. Each inventor had a unique story. In the ITC, a breakthrough discovery led to the claimed technology. In California, a brilliant engineer began his career by focusing on aspects of the technology that others took for granted. His unique perspective helped him challenge the status quo, and his solution resonated because he could explain the solution to others.

We first sued in California for trade secret misappropriation and patent infringement. Apple

challenged the patents before the Patent Office in IPRs. Our success in those IPRs strengthened our validity case, and Apple did not challenge validity at the later California jury trial.

After filing in California, we filed the ITC investigation on five Masimo patents. That strategy paid off when we prevailed at the ITC.

BH: Apple filed two patent infringement suits in Delaware, one asserting design patents and another asserting utility patents. We counterclaimed by asserting infringement of additional Masimo patents, some of which were asserted at the ITC.

We tried Apple's offensive patent claims to a jury in October 2024. Thus, Apple still faces an additional jury trial in Delaware on the patents Masimo prevailed on at the ITC with no offensive case remaining.

What were the greatest challenges during this case? How did you overcome them?

BH: With its tremendous resources, Apple hires great lawyers and a lot of them. They made us sharpen our focus repeatedly through the case. They battled every theory and every issue with zeal.

And when something did not go our way, we adapted and persevered. Our team exercised discipline and stuck to our vision for the campaign. We collaborated on the details, consistently challenged our assumptions, and relied on our proven ability to translate complex technologies and IP issues for a jury.

What is the significance of this case?

BC: In the November 2025 California patent trial, we secured the largest patent infringement verdict of 2025: over $634 million on behalf of Masimo with an additional $184 million in pre-judgment interest. The district court found that Apple misappropriated multiple Masimo trade secrets. And we also prevailed at the Federal Circuit on Apple's appeal regarding the ITC exclusion (import ban) proceedings.

Each win was significant on its own, but together they demonstrate our firm's ability to navigate simultaneous fronts on behalf of an innovative client against the world's largest company [by market capitalisation] and its extensive legal team. These results also showcase different remedies available in different forums for IP rights holders: substantial monetary recovery, market exclusion of infringing products, and judicial validation of trade secret rights.

How did your team approach the post-trial arguments over interest?

BH: Although the calculation is straightforward, inputs such as interest rate and compounding vary widely. We surveyed the large body of precedent and tailored our arguments to our specific case.

How do wins like this help the firm gain new clients/prove its credentials in these types of disputes?

BC: Our series of wins on behalf of Masimo against Apple encapsulates some of our firm's strongest qualities when it comes to IP litigation: first, we are extremely adept at crafting and executing multi-venue litigation strategies, both on the plaintiff and defence sides. Second, our litigators have deep technical knowledge that allows us to adapt on the fly during trial and break down highly complex technologies for juries. And lastly, we are passionate about protecting and advancing our clients' innovations.